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Report of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation

Eighteenth session
(19-22 May and 6 June 2014)

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Chapter I

Decisions adopted by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its eighteenth session

1. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation adopted the following decisions at its eighteenth session:

Decision 18/1
South-South cooperation

The High-level Committee,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which the Assembly endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[1]

Reaffirming also the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Nairobi from 1 to 3 December 2009, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/222 of 21 December 2009,[2]

Recalling its decisions 17/1 and 17/IM/1[3] and General Assembly resolution 68/230 of 20 December 2013,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation[4] and, in this regard, noting the non-inclusion of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit[5] and those arising from the evaluation by the United Nations Development Programme of its contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation during the period 2008-2011,[6]

Noting the announcement by the Secretary-General of the designation of the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as his Envoy on South-South Cooperation, and looking forward to further clarification regarding the mandate of the Envoy,

Noting also that the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into the policies and strategic frameworks of the funds and programmes of the United Nations system constitutes a positive effort,

Recognizing the importance of fulfilling the pending appointments of regional representatives of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation,

Recognizing also that the Joint Inspection Unit, in its report on South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system,[5] provides recommendations

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

[2] General Assembly resolution 64/222, annex.

[3] See SCC/17/IM/L.2, chap. I.

[4] SSC/18/3.

[5] See A/66/717.

[6] See DP/2013/31.

to the United Nations development system on the implementation of measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and taking note of the accompanying note by the Secretary-General,[7]

Recognizing further that further deliberation by Member States on the options presented in the report of the Secretary-General[4] will be required before a decision is taken,

Acknowledging the significance of South-South and triangular cooperation, in addition to North-South cooperation, and the potential of both to have a positive impact on the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, as well as the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation, particularly in the United Nations development system, including the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, in this context,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to present, during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, further information on the assignments and duties to be taken up by the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation deriving from his appointment as the Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation;

2. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to implement, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit[5] and the United Nations Development Programme[6] that remain unfulfilled;

3. *Requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to make specific recommendations on the additional support that entities of the United Nations system and Member States could provide to South-South and triangular cooperation, which could include, inter alia, voluntary secondment of staff and the appointment of Junior Professional Officers to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation;

4. *Requests* the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to fully align its work programme with its strategic framework for the period 2014-2017;[8]

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make the necessary adjustments, as appropriate, to the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation,[9] in consultation with Member States and agencies of the United Nations development system;

6. *Requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to establish a more formalized and strengthened inter-agency mechanism coordinated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, with a view to encouraging joint support for South-South and triangular initiatives and sharing of information on development activities and results achieved by various organizations through their respective business models in support of South-South and triangular cooperation, calls upon the United Nations development system to designate representational focal points to join the mechanism, and also requests the Administrator to give the Office an opportunity to be represented on a more regular basis in the strategic and

[7] A/66/717/Add.1.
[8] DP/CF/SSC/5.
[9] SSC/17/3.

coordination mechanisms of the Development Group when matters affecting South-South and triangular cooperation are being discussed;

7. *Calls upon* the United Nations Development Programme and other relevant organizations of the United Nations development system to assist developing countries in implementing projects of South-South cooperation, upon request and in a manner consistent with their mandates and strategic plans;

8. *Invites* the United Nations development system to encourage the transfer of technologies on mutually agreed terms for the benefit of developing countries to address poverty eradication and sustainable development;

9. *Invites* the Secretary-General to include in his synthesis report to be submitted before the end of 2014[10] information on the concrete steps taken to further strengthen South-South cooperation, particularly within the United Nations development system, including the strengthening of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, through improved allocation of resources;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its nineteenth session a comprehensive report on the progress made in the implementation of the present decision.

Decision 18/2
Provisional agenda for the nineteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation

The High-level Committee,

Taking into account the views expressed at its eighteenth session,

Approves the following provisional agenda for its nineteenth session, to be held in 2016:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, taking into account the role of South-South cooperation as a complement to, not as a substitute for, North-South cooperation, in the implementation of relevant major United Nations conferences in the social, economic and related fields.
3. Follow-up to actions arising from previous sessions of the High-level Committee, notably its eighteenth session, held in 2014.
4. Consideration of the comprehensive and detailed report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee.
5. Thematic discussion.*

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[10] General Assembly resolution 68/6, para. 25.

* Theme to be decided on the basis of consultations to be undertaken with Member States by the Bureau of the High-level Committee.

6. Contribution of the High-level Committee to the process of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

7. Adoption of the report of the Working Group.

8. Approval of the provisional agenda for the twentieth session of the High-level Committee.

9. Other matters.

10. Adoption of the report of the High-level Committee on its nineteenth session.

Chapter II
High-level plenary segment

A. Opening of the session

2. At its 1st meeting, on 19 May 2014, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation elected Abdulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, as President of its eighteenth session. The President made a statement.

3. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the President of the General Assembly.

4. Also at the same meeting, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) made a statement.

B. Introduction of reports on implementation

5. The Committee considered agenda items 2 to 4 at its 1st to 4th meetings, on 19 and 20 May.

6. The Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation introduced the following documents:

(a) Report prepared by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation on the review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, taking into account the complementary role of South-South cooperation in the implementation of relevant major United Nations conferences in the social, economic and related fields (SSC/18/1);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/18/2);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (SSC/18/3).

C. Discussion

7. Across the board, delegations expressed praise and continued strong support for South-South and triangular cooperation. Speaking on behalf of groups or as individual Member States or organizations, participants noted that South-South and triangular cooperation continued to grow in influence and impact, helping to advance national development agendas. They concurred that South-South cooperation had played a central role in achieving internationally agreed development goals, especially the Millennium Development Goals, and should figure in the post-2015 development agenda. Noting the organic expansion of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, delegations highlighted the role of such cooperation in redefining the international development landscape. Despite its vital role and benefits in driving development successes, South-South cooperation

continued to face challenges. In some cases, deficits in infrastructure, information and communications technology and science and technology made it difficult to expand South-South initiatives.

8. As at previous sessions of the Committee, a number of delegations reiterated that the nature of South-South cooperation was different from that of traditional development assistance, being more a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South, which contributed to national well-being and collective self-reliance. They stressed that it was the specific role and responsibility of countries of the South to set the South-South cooperation agenda, guided by the principles of national sovereignty, national ownership, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference and mutual benefit. As stated in the Nairobi outcome document, they asserted that South-South cooperation was not a substitute for, but a complement to, North-South cooperation and, to ensure maximum impact, the two should be pursued in tandem. From their perspective, therefore, South-South financial contributions did not constitute official development assistance but rather expressions of solidarity and cooperation.

9. Some delegations indicated that ensuring the maximum potential and impact of South-South cooperation required a long-term vision buttressed by a global institutional framework. They drew attention to the challenges that continued to restrain the support of the United Nations system for South-South cooperation, in particular, the persistent lack of resources, both financial and human. They stressed the need for increased bilateral and multilateral funding for South-South cooperation and urged development partners to abide by the commitments they had made at international forums. The United Nations, they noted, had a special role to play in that regard, particularly in influencing the post-2015 development agenda so as to ensure that the needs of the South were addressed and that development partners honoured their commitments. One delegation stated that it was the first country of the Group of 20 to reach the target of committing 0.7 per cent of its gross national income to official development assistance (ODA).

10. Many delegations recognized the important role played by the United Nations development system in promoting and advocating for South-South cooperation. One delegation stressed the role that the United Nations system played in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation in strategic areas such as trade, agriculture, intellectual property development, technology transfer and information and communications technology but expressed concern that the activities of some United Nations organizations remained thematically compartmentalized. Some delegations called for the integration of South-South cooperation into United Nations policies and programmes with a view to building the human and institutional capacities of developing countries.

11. Noting that the world in which the institutional arrangements governing South-South cooperation had been established differed from that of today, one delegation called for the promotion and expansion of South-South cooperation so that countries could have a dynamic framework for mutual cooperation and a range of technical, financial and other expertise or resources that could assist developing countries under the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. The same delegation stated that the United Nations should play an important role in promoting South-South cooperation by leveraging existing tools while recognizing other

instruments, platforms and partners, such as regional development banks, regional commissions and international financial institutions.

12. A number of delegations emphasized that the international community had already defined and established the theory and practice of South-South cooperation through the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the Nairobi outcome document. There was therefore no need to rethink its parameters through the establishment of guidelines, mapping frameworks and accountability mechanisms in line with aid effectiveness principles, an approach that was sought by some countries. One delegation cautioned that if the United Nations development system did not actively respond to the needs and expectations of the rising South, it would risk becoming irrelevant because the pulse and drive of South-South cooperation would continue unabated, irrespective of the extent of participation by the United Nations system.

13. Member States expressed divergent views concerning the report of the Secretary-General on measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (SSC/18/3). Some delegations looked favourably on the recommendations contained in the report. In particular, they recognized the advantage of having UNDP continue to serve as the institutional host of the Office. They also concurred with the proposal to strengthen the Office in order to ensure effective coordination and promotion of South-South cooperation within the United Nations development system. Another group of countries, referring to the recommendations of the Secretary-General, called for the establishment of an inter-agency mechanism for the Office as an integral part of the United Nations Development Group, which would enable the Office to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by South-South and triangular cooperation.

14. A number of delegations, however, expressed reservations with regard to the recommendations, which they viewed as maintaining the status quo. One delegation emphasized that strengthening the Office should go beyond merely changing its name to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to making a credible and serious effort to strengthen it through the provision of adequate financial and human resources or upgrading its status within the United Nations development system. Several delegations called for the establishment of the Office as a separate entity. Some delegations noted that, as the largest development arm of the United Nations system, UNDP should consider ways and means of assisting developing countries operationally in pursuing South-South cooperation projects and provide the Office with resources adequate to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

15. One delegation was of the view that the framework of operational guidelines failed to draw a clear distinction between, on the one hand, South-South projects implemented with the support of the United Nations system and, on the other, South-South cooperation initiatives outside the planning, execution and evaluation parameters of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

16. Many delegations pointed out that the report of the Secretary-General did not fully address the recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit on South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system. For example, they noted with concern that the recommendations concerning the status of the Office had not been heeded. They also stressed the need to revise the governance structure and secretariat support and to improve the access of the Office to the decision-making structures of the United Nations system, in particular through the United

Nations Development Group. Furthermore, they sought up-to-date information on the actual steps taken to implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, pointing in particular to the proposals to increase financial and human resources. Some delegations highlighted the recommendation of the Unit that United Nations organizations allocate not less than 0.5 per cent of their core budgets to the promotion of South-South cooperation.

17. A number of delegations expressed appreciation for the work of the Office in coordinating the support provided by the United Nations system to South-South and triangular cooperation. One group of delegations noted that the Office had been successful in creating a space in which United Nations actors, Member States, the private sector and civil society organizations could forge inclusive partnerships for effective development. They considered that the Office could play an important role in supporting the effectiveness and transparency of South-South cooperation, maximizing synergies with other forms of development finance and policies and assisting recipients in effectively aligning support with needs. Those delegations recognized and expressed strong support for triangular cooperation which, they noted, combined the comparative strengths of the South and the North, facilitated the sharing of knowledge and lessons learned and promoted shared responsibility for development results. Here again, they stressed that the Office had a central role to play in promoting triangular cooperation. Most delegates who spoke during the plenary session welcomed the announced intention of the Secretary-General to designate the Director of the Office as his Special Representative on South-South Cooperation.

18. Some delegations highlighted the particular and urgent development needs of the least developed countries and drew attention to the crucial role that South-South cooperation could play in addressing them, particularly in view of the difficulties that traditional donors were facing in the wake of the global financial crisis. They suggested grounding South-South cooperation efforts in the least developed countries in actions identified in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action), which would help to consolidate and expand the transformation taking place in South-South trade, investment and economic cooperation. Doing so, they noted, would enable the South to work more closely in partnership with the least developed countries in relation to sustained economic growth, diversification, employment and poverty reduction.

19. The same delegations encouraged development partners in a position to do so, at the regional, subregional and interregional levels, to: (a) provide duty-free and quota-free market access to all products from the least developed countries; (b) adopt investment preference regimes that would encourage their corporations to invest in infrastructure and productive capacity; (c) step up the sharing of technologies, knowledge and best practices; (d) increase development cooperation by diversifying funding sources; and (e) work with countries of the North to improve complementarities and promote synergies through triangular cooperation in the least developed countries.

20. Considering the changes in the international development landscape and the continued growth of South-South and triangular cooperation, several countries pointed to and welcomed the emergence of developing countries as key actors in global and regional development efforts and in forging the new post-2015 development agenda. The challenges of the post-2015 world, they stressed, would

require all actors to work together in a new development landscape, which meant moving beyond traditional development by embracing a global, multi-stakeholder approach and by recognizing the unique contributions of each, exchanging information on lessons learned, and fostering and understanding comparative advantages, complementarities and synergies. Likewise, development partners needed to understand the contributions of South-South and triangular cooperation in achieving development outcomes in areas such as technical cooperation, capacity-building and financing for development, and in providing support to countries in transition.

21. It was noted that the regional commissions should continue to play a catalytic role in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation, which had become central in supporting vibrant growth poles of the world economy. Enhanced cooperation from developed countries and from international and regional organizations and financial institutions was also needed at both the financial and technical levels to boost the efforts of countries of the South. Developed countries should pursue a more vibrant and creative approach in dealing with triangular cooperation arrangements by exploring non-traditional areas of cooperation that responded to the evolving development priorities of the South. In that regard, some delegations stressed the importance of identifying more effective instruments and means to measure the results of South-South and triangular cooperation, a crucial point in developing the post-2015 development agenda. Some countries were particularly keen to use the tools already developed through the aid and development effectiveness mechanisms, a point on which countries diverged.

22. Highlighting the potential of South-South cooperation in advancing the work of sustainable development, a few delegations stressed that choosing between South-South and triangular cooperation was not the issue; rather, it was necessary to identify the forms of South-South and triangular cooperation that were the most successful and the conditions under which they had succeeded. They noted, however, that the success of South-South cooperation lay ultimately with the countries of the South.

23. Some delegations recalled that the first High-level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, held in Mexico City on 15 and 16 April 2014, had addressed the issue of South-South cooperation and its role in the global development architecture. However, some delegations were of the view that the Meeting, as well as other meetings relating to aid effectiveness or development effectiveness, did not follow established United Nations procedures and should not be considered part of the framework that governs South-South cooperation.

24. Representatives of the specialized agencies and an intergovernmental organization participated in the general debate. They presented information on a wide diversity of South-South policies, activities, initiatives and exchange mechanisms, including those designed to strengthen productive capacities. They noted the creation of special arrangements and strategies for the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation and described operational activities that reflected the new importance attached to South-South cooperation as a means of expanding growth and development potential. At the interregional level, such South-South inspired efforts had led to socially inclusive poverty reduction and support for small and medium-sized enterprises. At the regional level, they had helped to launch

successful peer-to-peer learning through twinning arrangements. At the subregional level, they had supported knowledge-sharing and capacity-building for policy analysis and had helped to expand knowledge-sharing platforms.

25. The representative of a regional development bank stated that countries in the region shared many development challenges and opportunities which could be better addressed collectively through horizontal South-South cooperation, thereby adding value to purely national interventions. That would include the provision of regional public goods. He also suggested that South-South cooperation that emphasized horizontal collective action could be especially useful for the effective implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. In addition, the representative of the bank expressed strong support for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as a key institutional mechanism that served as a clearinghouse for global development experiences and knowledge and acted as an honest broker for what worked and what did not. He, along with many other delegations, referred to the usefulness of the report on the review of South-South and triangular cooperation and of the progress made during the biennium 2012-2014 (SSC/18/1), which had been prepared by the Office.

26. Given that the working group on the draft decision did not conclude its work on 22 May, the President of the Committee convened an additional plenary session on 23 May to address outstanding issues. In their decision-making deliberations, delegations noted that Member States had made significant progress and shown a high degree of flexibility in their push to reach consensus on South-South cooperation, a topic that was important to all of them. There was a general appeal from all delegations to avoid a repetition of the deadlock encountered at the seventeenth session of the Committee, held in 2012, which they emphasized should not be considered a precedent for future deliberations. Delegations as a whole appealed to the President of the Committee to guide them towards reaching a consensus.

27. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed concern that, despite the genuine efforts made towards achieving progress and the flexibility demonstrated, the Committee had had to extend its session as a result of the inability of Member States to reach a consensus-based decision which he noted was due in part to delaying tactics intended to weaken the decision. He stressed that South-South cooperation was a serious topic for the group of countries concerned, which stood ready to take immediate action on a decision with the briefest delay.

28. While understanding the frustration expressed by some over the postponed consensus on a decision, another representative, also speaking on behalf of a group of countries, stressed that there were no conscious efforts being made tactically to delay negotiations and weaken an eventual decision. Likewise, he noted that Member States should not consider the deadlock at the seventeenth session of the Committee as a precedent that would set a pattern for its future deliberations. He stated that tough negotiations among Member States did occur and it was the task of delegations to work through the difficulties to achieve consensus in good faith. South-South cooperation, he noted, was equally important to the group of countries of which his was a member.

29. Two representatives, one of whom spoke on behalf of a group of countries, expressed optimism that Member States were close to reaching a consensus-based decision, and appealed to all delegations to coordinate to that end.

30. In conclusion, the President stressed the importance of reaching a consensus-based decision, which he noted would be a successful outcome for all Member States and for South-South cooperation overall. He proposed 5 June 2014 as the deadline for finalizing deliberations and reaching a decision, to which all Member States agreed.

Chapter III

Thematic discussion: "In the context of the evolving post-2015 development agenda, contributions and strategy of the United Nations development system to promote and strengthen South-South cooperation"

31. The Committee considered agenda item 5 at its 4th meeting, on 20 May.

32. The Vice-President of the Committee and moderator of the thematic discussion, Karena Lyons (New Zealand), introduced the seven panel members.[11]

33. The thematic debate explored how, in the post-2015 context, developing countries should collectively pursue economic growth and sustainable development through South-South cooperation with the support of the United Nations system. Within that overall framework, discussions touched upon issues of food security, the voice of the South in global governance, the potential of regional public goods, and successful approaches to tackling the challenges of poverty reduction and income inequality, the environment and climate change.

34. Each of the seven experts who made a presentation during the discussion addressed a specific aspect of the theme under discussion.

In the context of the post-2015 agenda, how developing countries should collectively pursue economic growth and sustainable development with the support of the United Nations system

35. The presenter highlighted that significant progress had been made since the convening of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in forging a transformative development agenda, which was characterized by the transition from a compartmentalized focus on poverty reduction to the more holistic approach of sustainable development. It was a process that Member States had led and owned, and the time had arrived to intensify partnership-building and to address collectively the persistent challenges that the world was facing. The two intergovernmental mechanisms driving the transition were the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. The Working Group had managed one of the biggest outreach campaigns to engage stakeholders in a complex, difficult discussion but consensus had emerged on how to build on the agenda of the Millennium Development Goals while remaining continuously engaged in dialogue on universality, climate change, peace and stability, and means of implementation. South-South and triangular cooperation had figured prominently in the discussions and were viewed as crucial modalities in the post-2015 development agenda and key to achieving sustainable development. Differences nevertheless remained, with some delegations stressing the responsibility of all parties and others the complementarity of South-South and traditional cooperation. South-South cooperation offered broader, innovative approaches to development solutions that went beyond a narrow focus on economic development and ODA, building on the experiences, lessons learned and knowledge-sharing of the South in

[11] The views expressed by the panellists are not necessarily those of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

collaboration with a broad range of partners, including civil society and the private sector. The United Nations was well positioned to take the lead in creating a new, inclusive coordination institution, working at the global and regional levels, to anchor the investments and resources needed to meet the scale of the challenges ahead.

How developing countries should collectively pursue sustainable economic growth and food security through South-South cooperation with the support of the United Nations system

36. The presenter stressed that, despite the significant progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, food security remained the major development issue. Collective efforts were therefore crucial in mobilizing the resources necessary to match food production with rising population growth, addressing hunger and malnutrition, stepping up agricultural production in a sustainable manner, reducing rural poverty, designing an efficient food system and building resilience to shocks and crises, such as climate change. South-South cooperation was widely recognized as the most efficient way to share knowledge and experience in tackling food security challenges, and the United Nations was strategically placed to play a facilitating and impartial role, ensuring technical quality assurance and fostering innovative partnerships in four areas: (a) facilitating the uptake of development solutions; (b) promoting platforms for knowledge networking; (c) providing upstream policy support; and (d) fostering an enabling environment for effective South-South cooperation. In supporting efforts to tackle those challenges, the United Nations also engaged in facilitating triangular cooperation with development partners. Experience had shown that development interventions tended to be more successful when buttressed by strong national ownership, government support and political will, and where host countries participated in co-financing. It was therefore important to intensify efforts to explore South-South partnerships, facilitating the sharing of knowledge and technical solutions to adapt and introduce innovative financing solutions grounded in evidence-based analysis. South-South and triangular cooperation would gain in importance in the post-2015 agenda as the most efficient modalities in addressing development challenges and the looming food security crisis, for which a multi-stakeholder approach was the only solution.

Increasing the voice of the South in global governance regimes in the post-2015 development agenda

37. The presenter focused on three main points: (a) structural constraints that had hampered the ability of developing countries to participate and have a voice in global governance; (b) institutional capacity constraints that developing countries faced when engaging in multilateral negotiations; and (c) exploration of the options for institutional architecture that could be considered in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. The success of the post-2015 agenda and the realization of sustainable development goals would require a high degree of cooperation with regard to economic and sustainable development policy issues, which would best be achieved through a global economic governance mechanism that: (a) enabled developing countries to participate effectively in and shape multilateral economic policy and norm-setting and their implementation and (b) delivered effective support to developing countries for the implementation of policy and norms, neither

of which was currently the case. The United Nations stood out as the sole global institution in which developing countries had been more successful, through, for example, the Group of 77 and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, in having a voice in and influencing the global development agenda. However, the influence of the Organization in steering the global economic agenda had been diminishing despite its mandate; this in turn had limited the global policy impact that developing countries would have had. That structural asymmetry had distorted the governance of the global economic agenda and the role of the United Nations in that governance structure needed to be strengthened as part of the post-2015 development agenda. This would be one way of harnessing the collective voice of the South, along with building the capacity for institutional and multilateral engagement and the institutional architecture of developing countries.

Role of South-South cooperation in the provision of regional public goods

38. The presenter discussed regional cooperation, focusing in particular on regional public goods, their key features, examples of their development impact and meaningful lessons learned. It was appropriate to focus on regional public goods because the development challenges and opportunities for countries of the same region were similar and best addressed through collective regional action, thereby adding value to national interventions. Building on the experiences of the Inter-American Development Bank, the presenter noted that regionally focused programmes facilitated the forging of regional partnerships to produce the goods, services and resources consumed collectively by countries in the region. Adding value to national interventions could be done in different ways, such as by: (a) providing incentives to correct coordination failures at the outset; (b) supporting horizontal South-South cooperation, whereby the developing countries involved engage to identity challenges and opportunities, decide on the agenda and determine the governance structure; (c) acting as a knowledge hub; and (d) seeking ways to scale up. Because regional programmes were complex and costly, however, their implementation structure and benefits differed by country and context. Regional projects also competed with national investments which could have shorter-term impact and visibility, and there was always uncertainty about the costs and benefits that such programmes would generate. Similarly, governance structures and institutional arrangements differed depending on the countries involved, a situation that underlined the importance of having an honest broker and outside partners, along with the strong political will of all participating countries. The presenter pointed to best practices regarding regional public goods in the areas of quality education in primary schools, the provision of medications and the pensions of migrant workers. Experience had shown that bottom-up approaches increased ownership and the likelihood of appropriate national implementation. The United Nations must continue to serve as the global broker of development knowledge, act as a catalyst for South-South and triangular cooperation, and foster policies that reduce poverty, tackle inequality and raise the living standards of all.

How South-South cooperation could help developing countries tackle poverty and income inequality

39. The presenter asserted that 2014 was the year of inequality, the new defining challenge facing the world. An Oxfam report launched at the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2014 had indicated, for example, that

the world's 85 richest people owned the same level of wealth as the bottom half of the population, or the richest 1 per cent owned 46 per cent of global wealth while the richest 10 per cent owned 86 per cent. That condition of inequality affected rich and poor countries alike, with the problem exacerbated by the 2008 global financial crisis. The inherent contradiction in the situation was that the world had nevertheless succeeded in recent decades in dramatically reducing poverty across the globe and had achieved other significant development successes, such as the decline in child mortality. Those gains, however, had occurred in parallel with rising inequality at many levels, not only with regard to income. The international development community had to rethink and refocus development priorities to take into account the new stark reality of inequality and to hone in on those at the bottom end of the distribution. That trend was even more worrisome because the rising inequality was occurring along with a starker shift in power towards the wealthy at the expense of all others, especially the poor, whose policy and political space and influence were dwindling as a consequence. The danger was that the successful eradication of poverty could lead people to believe erroneously that injustice was behind them and that development cooperation would no longer be needed. Inequality was the result of policy decisions and must not be viewed in terms of a person's or a people's fate. The international community therefore needed to debate and find solutions to those adverse policies, building on the shared experience of countries that had achieved a better equilibrium through, for example, pro-poor policies that served to empower people across the various social strata. The United Nations had to serve as the world's global development broker, showcasing the value of pro-poor approaches to poverty in order to tackle the current dilemma of inequality.

How developing countries should collectively pursue economic growth with concern for the environment through South-South cooperation

40. The presenter focused on three aspects of the main theme: (a) the conceptual basis of South-South cooperation; (b) key ingredients for South-South cooperation; and (c) a proposed agenda for South-South cooperation for growth and environmental sustainability. With regard to the first aspect, there were three paradigms of international cooperation currently in use: (a) paternalism, which did not consider the historical factors that had led to the situation that international development cooperation sought to remedy and which sought to remake the recipient in the image of the donor, often characteristic of traditional aid schemes in the presence of unbalanced governance structures; (b) responsibility, which recognized responsibility for current underlying development conditions in line with the concept of common but differentiated responsibility and implied the need to pursue balanced governance structures of development institutions; and (c) shared development experience, whereby countries sought to share their development experiences with the purpose of tackling development challenges collectively, driven by demand and supply, carried out bilaterally or multilaterally, at times institutionalized, and according to which each partner determined its needs and retained its equal policy space. With regard to the second aspect, the first main ingredient for successful South-South cooperation was finance, focused on capacity-building with different modes of financing. The other ingredient was institutional support, focused on capacity-building of persons and institutions, without which finance would not work. With respect to the third aspect, the presenter pointed to a number of topics on which a South-South cooperation agenda should focus: (a) high

value-added sustainable agriculture; (b) cooperative research on and development of new crop varieties and agronomy; (c) provision of water resources, sanitation and drinking water; (d) public health; (e) finance and delivery mechanisms for renewable energy; (f) development of databases for genetic resources and traditional knowledge; (g) establishment of monitoring and early warning systems for extreme climate events; (h) arrangements for mutual assistance on a regional basis in the event of natural disasters; and (i) remote sensing for mapping natural resources and environmental monitoring as well as modelling and information and communications technology tools for improving national environmental governance and policymaking and planning. Finally, developing countries, having adopted a unified position on the transfer of technology in relation to global environmental processes, had to focus on: (a) cooperative research and development; (b) concession-sharing of technology developed with public funding; and (c) demonstrating South-South political unity when a party invoked compulsory licensing and the use of other flexibilities in the global intellectual property system.

How developing countries should collectively pursue economic growth to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities through South-South cooperation in the post-2015 agenda with the support of the United Nations system

41. The presenter concentrated on four related areas: (a) the rising South and its dynamics; (b) the nature of South-South cooperation; (c) how South-South cooperation could enhance inclusive growth to reduce poverty and inequality; and (d) the role that the United Nations system could play. On the rising South, five trends were visible: (a) impressive progress in economic development and human well-being, driven by the engine of growth of the South and its catalytic role as a source of recovery; (b) uneven benefits and inequality, which extended beyond income to other areas, including opportunities; (c) individual and collective aspirations of the peoples of the South for a better life, more human freedom and better global representation; (d) a surge in human creativity and innovation in policies, programmes and projects; and (e) a growing realization of the importance of inclusive growth for the reduction of poverty and inequality. In that context, the nature of South-South cooperation became more apparent and included five trends: (a) sharing of policy experiments; (b) sharing of innovative low-cost technology; (c) sharing of approaches that worked and those that failed, whether implemented by government or civil society; (d) exploration of the possibilities of global and regional public goods built on labour and environmental standards that could give greater leverage to developing countries; and (e) pooling of resources. South-South cooperation could enhance inclusive growth for the reduction of poverty and inequality through the following seven actions: (a) taking advantage collectively of global opportunities; (b) forging greater policy coherence and coordination with regard to the reduction of poverty and inequality; (c) moving forward jointly towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; (d) making serious efforts to seize the opportunities inherent in global public goods; (e) expanding development financing from developing countries; (f) resolving to genuinely share innovative experiments; and (g) prioritizing and building on the successes of local development. The United Nations had a central role to play in all of those areas as a trusted partner and facilitator and as a catalyst.

General discussion

42. In the general discussion that followed, delegations concurred with the many points that the experts had raised and focused on the following: (a) the potential of global public goods; (b) the need to build infrastructure in all areas; (c) the value of taking a bottom-up approach to programming; (d) the imperative of reforming the global governance structure of economic development so that developing countries had greater influence; (e) the importance of maintaining poverty reduction as the central focus of the sustainable development approach; and (f) safeguarding and championing of the unique approaches embodied in South-South cooperation, the principles of which differed from those of traditional development cooperation. They also speculated on the specific role of South-South cooperation in the post-2015 framework and general perspectives on its future.

43. In response, the panellists made a number of points. They assured Member States that the overarching aim of the holistic approach towards sustainable development remained poverty reduction and underlined the success stories in taking a bottom-up, grass-roots approach to development. They considered that developing countries would benefit greatly from a genuine reform of global and regional trading arrangements and stronger regional cooperation and coherence. They urged developing countries to work through existing development cooperation institutions in order to leverage change in governance. For the post-2015 agenda to be a veritable engine for governance change, they strongly encouraged Member States to establish an institutional home within the United Nations system to ground the agenda and guide it forward. They also saw a key role for the United Nations system in helping developing countries to address their capacity constraints and in facilitating knowledge-sharing. In the future, development financing would need to be taken beyond the parameters of traditional ODA in order to make it more meaningful and to allow the exploration of more innovative approaches that could be adapted to country needs. Two key elements of success lay in the commitment of global partnerships and the push to seek innovation in partnering.

Chapter IV
Report of the Working Group

44. The Committee considered agenda item 6 at its 6th meeting, on 6 June.

45. The Rapporteur of the session, who also served as the Rapporteur of the Working Group, introduced the report of the Working Group.

46. The Committee adopted the report of the Working Group.

Chapter V

Provisional agenda for the nineteenth session of the Committee

47. The Committee considered agenda item 7 at its 6th meeting, on 6 June.

48. The Committee approved the provisional agenda for its nineteenth session (see chap. I, decision 18/2) and authorized its President to consult with the representatives of Member States on the thematic discussion for the nineteenth session and to communicate the decision taken on the basis of those consultations to Member States in advance of the nineteenth session in order to enable delegations to make the appropriate preparations.

Chapter VI
Other matters

49. One delegation recalled that, at the opening meeting of the session, it had been announced that the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation was to be appointed as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, an announcement that had been welcomed by all Member States that made interventions.

50. The same delegation expressed concern about the subsequent announcement of the designation of the Director of the Office as the Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, which was inconsistent with the earlier announcement. That delegation expressed deep concern about the discrepancy in high-level official announcements and sought clarification on the change and its possible institutional implications.

Chapter VII
Adoption of the report

51. The Committee considered agenda item 9 at its 6th meeting, on 6 June.

52. The Rapporteur, Eduardo Porretti (Argentina), introduced the draft report of the Committee.

53. The Committee adopted the draft report and entrusted the Rapporteur with its completion.

Chapter VIII
Closure of the session

54. At the 6th meeting, on 6 June, a closing statement was made by the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

55. At the same meeting, closing statements were also made by the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean on behalf of the Administrator of UNDP and the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

56. One delegation, noting that the closing meeting of the eighteenth session was being held on 6 June and not 5 June as previously agreed, requested the Secretariat to ensure that such incidents did not occur at future sessions.

Chapter IX
Organizational matters

A. Date and place of the session

57. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation held its eighteenth session at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 22 May and on 6 June 2014. The meeting concluded on 6 June rather than on 22 May as previously scheduled because Member States had not reached consensus on the decisions by 22 May. On 23 May, it was agreed that the session would reconvene on 5 June to conclude its work. However, despite all efforts, it was impossible to obtain conference room facilities for 5 June; the earliest date that the requisite services could be made available was 6 June, when the Committee concluded its work and the session was declared closed. The Committee held six meetings. It also held an organizational meeting on 1 May which was adjourned until its resumption and conclusion on 14 May.

58. The establishment, background, history, chronology and reports on the work of the previous sessions of the Committee are contained in the reports of the Committee to the General Assembly.[12]

59. In accordance with paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 35/202, the session was convened by the Administrator of UNDP under the usual procedural arrangements.

B. Attendance

60. The eighteenth session of the Committee was attended by representatives of States Members of the United Nations or States participating in UNDP. Also attending were representatives of United Nations bodies, funds and programmes; specialized agencies; intergovernmental organizations; and individuals invited to participate as panellists. The list of those attending the session is contained in annex I to the present report.

C. Election of officers

61. The Committee elected its officers by acclamation, as follows:

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[12] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39* and corrigendum (A/35/39 and Corr.1); ibid., *Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/36/39); ibid., *Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/38/39); ibid., *Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/40/39); ibid., *Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/42/39); ibid., *Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/44/39); ibid., *Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/46/39); ibid., *Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/48/39); ibid., *Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/50/39); ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/52/39); ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/54/39); ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/56/39); ibid., *Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/58/39); *Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/60/39); *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/62/39); ibid., *Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/65/39); and ibid., *Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/67/39).

President:
Abdulkalam Abdul Momen (Bangladesh)

Vice-Presidents:
Remongar Denis (Liberia)
Yaroslav Golitsyn (Ukraine)
Karena Lyons (New Zealand)

Rapporteur:
Eduardo Porretti (Argentina)

62. The Committee approved the recommendation of its President that Vice-Presidents Remongar Denis (Liberia) and Karena Lyons (New Zealand) serve as Co-Chairs of the Working Group. The Working Group elected Eduardo Porretti (Argentina) as its Rapporteur.

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

63. The Committee held an organizational meeting in New York on 1 May 2014 to elect the Bureau of its eighteenth session and to adopt the provisional agenda and programme of work.

64. After discussions, the meeting was adjourned until 14 May, at which time the Committee amended and adopted the provisional annotated agenda (SSC/18/L.2) and organization of work (SSC/18/L.3) for its eighteenth session. The amendment to the agenda related to item 5, whereby it was decided that the thematic discussion would be on the topic "In the context of the evolving post-2015 development agenda, contributions and strategy of the United Nations development system to promote and strengthen South-South cooperation". A general debate on items 2 to 4 was held in plenary session on 19 and 20 May. The Working Group, which began its work on 21 May, was assigned agenda items 2 to 4 for substantive discussion and charged with making recommendations to the Committee. The list of documents before the Committee is contained in annex II to the present report.

Annex I

List of those attending the eighteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation

States Members of the United Nations or States participating in the United Nations Development Programme

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Non-member States having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly

Holy See
State of Palestine

United Nations Secretariat and other units

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Regional Commissions New York Office

United Nations bodies, funds and programmes

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
United Nations Human Settlements Programme
United Nations Development Programme

United Nations research and training institutes

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute

Specialized agencies

International Labour Organization
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
United Nations Industrial Development Organization
World Intellectual Property Organization

Intergovernmental organizations

Asian Development Bank
European Union
Inter-American Development Bank
Islamic Development Bank
Organization of Islamic Cooperation
Partners in Population and Development
South Centre

Other entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly

Inter-Parliamentary Union
Sovereign Military Order of Malta

Individuals invited to participate as panellists

Amina Mohammed (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning)

Jong-Jin Kim (Director, South-South and Resource Mobilization Division, Technical Cooperation Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)

Ricardo Fuentes-Nieva (Head of Research, Oxfam, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Vicente Paolo Yu, (Head of Administration and Coordinator of the Global Governance Programme, South Centre)

Prodipto Ghosh (Distinguished Fellow and Director, Earth Science and Climate Change Division, The Energy and Resources Institute)

Joaquim Tres (Coordinator of Regional Integration Instruments, Integration and Trade Sector, Inter-American Development Bank)

Selim Jahan (Director, Poverty Practice Group, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme)

Annex II

List of documents before the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its eighteenth session

Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3)

Report on the intersessional meeting of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, held on 4 June 2013 (SSC/17/IM/L.2)

Report prepared by the United Nations Office on South-South Cooperation on the review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, taking into account the complementary role of South-South cooperation in the implementation of relevant major United Nations conferences in the social economic and related fields (SSC/18/1)

Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/18/2)

Report of the Secretary-General on measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (SSC/18/3)

Provisional annotated agenda and list of documents (SSC/18/L.2)

Note by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the organization of work (SSC/18/L.3)

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